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ABSTRACT

Teenagers' views of women's roles are important because the stage of adolescence brings with it an intense concern with the adult roles of men and women. Although the images created by teenagers may appear to be similar across nations, the meanings of the images may differ for teenagers from different cultures. This study describes the use of adolescent interpreters to understand images in a cross-cultural context. Adolescents (N=88) from Guatemala, the Phillipines, and the United States interpreted their peers' drawings of the ideal woman as cook or office worker. For adolescent interpreters in all three countries, women office workers were seen as hardworking. Filipino adolescents also described them as rebellious, untidy, and liberal. U.S. students saw them as bored with tedious office work, success-oriented, and yearning for fulfillment. Young people in Guatemala described women office workers as hoping for a better future, working for their families, and as strong educated women. Women cooking were seen as altruistic and good to others. Filipino adolescents described cooks as burdened by the duty of cooking. U.S. students described them as happy. As in the drawings of women office workers, Guatemalan young people saw the possibility for betterment, improvement, and reaching one's goals. Despite many similarities, Guatemalan adolescents focused on the qualities of the person, and U.S. and Filipino adolescents focused on the role. (LLL)

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Women's worldly fate: Guatemalan, Filipino, and U.S.A. adolescents' images of women as office workers and homemakers

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In previous studies, adolescents of different nationalities often drew the ideal woman cooking or working in an office. Since similar images may have different meanings for adolescents and adults or for adolescents of different cultures, in this study we asked adolescents to interpret the drawings of their peers. Eighty-eight adolescents (11- 19 years old) wrote interpretations of same-nationality peers' drawings depicting women cooking and working in offices. Themes such as "hardworking" were identified through qualitative analysis. Kappa values for agreement between scorers ranged from .74 to .94. Adolescents in all three countries interpreted women office workers as hardworking. Filipino adolescents also described them as rebellious, untidy, and liberal; U.S.A. students saw them as bored with tedious office work, success-oriented, and yearning for fulfillment; and Guatemalan adolescents saw office workers as representing hope for opportunity, appreciation for work and betterment of the family. Women cooking were commonly seen as altruistic and good to others. In addition, Filipino adolescents described cooks as food-oriented and burdened by the role; U.S.A. students described them as content in the role of "happy housewife"; and Guatemalan adolescents viewed women cooking as wanting to better themselves, family oriented, and hardworking. Despite many similarities, Guatemalan adolescents focused on the qualities of the person, and U.S.A. and Filipino adolescents focused on the role.

Although the roles of women vary worldwide, international studies have demonstrated that women do the burden of the world's work (Figure1). For example, women in industrialized countries do ten hours of domestic work for each 3 done by men, yet they do almost equal amounts of paid labor (Seager & Olson, 1986). Women have only 10 hours of leisure time for each 14 hours that men have. Similar findings are reported for non-industrialized countries, where women do the major share of the work, including almost all water gathering (Waring, 1988). Figure 2 presents an adolescent girl's drawing of a woman getting water. Women's roles are significant since they directly impact the power to influence social ideology and social policy (Sutton, Makiesky, Dwyer, & Klein, 1973).

Teenager's views of women's roles are particularly important because the stage of adolescence brings with it an intense concern with the adult roles of men and women. Moreover, the emerging values of young people may be important since they are the policymakers of the next generation. Although adolescents' views do not differ widely from those of their parents, "it makes sense to assume that each new generation will develop values in order to adapt to the changing political and technological context in which their adult future will unfold" (Newman & Newman, 1986, p. 203). In our international studies of adolescents' views of women's roles, we have asked teenage boys and girls to draw the ideal woman doing something. Although children's drawings have been used as measures of intelligence, psychopathology, self-concept, and attitudes and values (Holtzman, 1980), we have used drawings as indicators of values, gender role attitudes, and attitudes about work and leisure. Drawings of the ideal woman may indicate something about the adolescents' values, and beliefs, and attitudes about women's roles and traits. Moreover, the instruction to draw the person "doing something" provides a context for the person and serves to indicate valued activities.

Two images that have recurred in our samples from many parts of the world, including the Philippines, the United States, and Guatemala, are images of the ideal woman cooking and the ideal woman working in an office. These roles represent the two major categories of work for women - the private and public spheres respectively (Sutton et al., 1973) .

Although the images created by the teenagers may appear to be similar across nations, the meanings of the images may differ for teenager's from different cultures. Moreover, if adolescents themselves are the actual "culture bearers" of youth culture, their interpretations of their peer's drawings may lead to increased understanding of the drawings' meanings.

In this study we describe the use of adolescent interpreters to understand images in a cross-cultural context. In this study adolescents from Guatemala, the Philippines, and the U.S.A. interpreted their peer's drawings of the ideal woman as cook or office worker.

Method

Materials

From previous studies in which adolescents were instructed to draw the ideal woman doing something, three representative drawings of the ideal woman cooking and three of the ideal woman working in offices were selected from a U.S.A. sample, from a Guatemalan sample, and from a Philippine sample. Criteria for selection were that the drawing be representative and of good quality. See Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 for the drawings used.

The instructions were as follows:

> Some researchers have been studying teenagers in Iceland, Guatemala, Holland, Mexico, Spain, the Phillippines, and the U.S.A. They are trying to understand how teenagers around the world are similar and different. Would you like to look at some drawings done by teenagers in the USA [Philippines, Guatemala]? Some teenagers drew similar pictures, such as pictures of men lifting weights or men carrying flowers. Others drew pictures of women exercising or women holding a

baby. What do you think the teenagers might have had in mind when they drew these pictures?

Please use your imagination, creativity and knowledge of people your own age when filling out the following pages. Give your honest opinion. Any ideas you have are helpful (no matter how weird, wild, or silly they might seem). After we discuss these pictures in class would you be willing to donate your comments here to science, so the researchers could add them to others they've collected? Thank you for your help!

What do you think the teenagers might have had in mind when they drew these pictures of women cooking [working in offices]? What are these women like? What kinds of personalities do they have? What are their likes and dislikes? What sorts of things do they do and say? What do they want out of life? Can you think of anything else about these pictures? Please write down any ideas that you have (no matter how weird, wild, or silly they might seem).

Adolescent interpreters

Thirty adolescents (14 to 17 years old) attending a private school in Manila, the Philippines, 19 adolescents (16 to 19 years old) attending a public school in St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A., and 39 adolescents (11 to 19 years old) attending a public or one of two private schools in Antigua, Guatemala, completed the questionnaire, described above, in which they interpreted the drawings of adolescents from their own country. The language of instruction in the Philippine school was English, and thus the English version of the questionnaire was deemed appropriate. In Guatemala a Spanish version of the questionnaire was used. The U.S.A. public school which the interpreters attended is well-known for its academic excellence, and thus the five schools were judged to be roughly equivalent in terms of academic standards. From the populations served by these schools, it was judged that most student respondents came from economically advantaged homes in their respective countries. The adolescents participated as part of a classroom exercise, and all volunteered to donate their questionnaires to the research project.

Qualitative analysis

The interpretations were first typed and organized by topic (cooking or working in offices) and country of origin. Two senior researchers, two to five graduate students, and two undergraduate assistants met weekly for more than one year to discover the meaning of the written interpretations. Two

young women who had spent part of their adolescence in the Philippines and part in the United States served as a consultants. During that time we considered and rejected a variety of different scoring categories for content analysis.

The categories for the content of themes were eventually arrived at. One graduate student did extensive labelling and counting of all the stereotypes and themes, consulting with the rest of the group regularly. Then another graduate student, new to the research team, scored the entries using the derived stereotypes and themes as categories. Interrater reliability was assessed using kappa, a measure of concordance which corrects for chance agreement (House, House, & Campbell, 1981; Kramer & Feinstein, 1981.) Kappa values ranged from .74 to .94 for themes of women cooking and working in offices for the three samples.

Results

Women cooking

The themes for women cooking in the Philippines, Guatemala, and the United States as derived from comments by adolescent interpreters are presented in Tables 1, 2, & 3. In the Philippines the most prevalent themes were the apparently contradictory ideas that cooking is onerous and a burden and the the wormen cooking are content in that role. In Guatemala, the major themes were the kindness, goodness, and moral stature of the women cooking and the idea that the cooks were hoping to better themselves. U.S. interpreters saw women cooking as content, pleasing others, and happy.

Women working in offices

The themes for women working in offices in the Philippines, Guatemala, in the United States as derived from comments by adolescent interpreters are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6. In the Philippines major themes were that the women office workers were untidy, disorganized, and sexy. Guatemalan interpreters saw them as hoping for many things, and working hard for their betterment. Adolescents in the U.S.A. saw female office workers as bored with the routine of office work and yearning for something more.

Discussion

The major point of these findings is that what first glance may seem to be similar images may have different meanings for adolescents of the Philippines, Guatemala, and the United States. Although images of the ideal woman as a cook or office worker may appear to be cross-national universals, these images come from different cultural experiences, and may be representative of different dimensions of experience in these three parts of the world (e.g. Church, 1987) .

For adolescent interpreters in all three countries, women office workers were seen as hardworking and pleasant. Filipino adolescents also described them in terms of their attractivenss, and whether they were organized or disorganized, neat or tidy. They were often portrayed as rebellious. U.S.A. students saw office workers as bored with tedious office work, success-oriented, and yearning for fulfillment. Young people in Guatemala described women office workers as hoping for a better future, working for their families, and as strong educated women. In part, these differences may represent the reality for girls from these countries. In Guatemala only 15 % of girls are in secondary education (Seager & Olson, 1986). Thus office work, which reguires education, represents great effort and achievement. In the U.S.A. 95 % of girls attend secondary schools, so that adequate education for office work is almost universal and less salient for teenage girls. However, in the U.S.A. women are occupationally concentrated and segregated in clerical jobs, which provide low pay and low status. As in the popular movie, Nine to five, women office workers were portrayed as dissatisfied. In the Philippines, with intermediate levels of educational opportunities for girls (68% of girls in secondary education), women working in offices in were described as somewhat rebellious, sexy, and modern. For middle-class women to be employed in the Philippines may represent adoption of more "Western" values, education, and upward social mobility (Skeen, Paguio, Robinson, & Deal, 1988) One Filipino adolescent described this view succinctly, "these women are like sexy and sophisticated girls that are very modern". Another had a slightly different sentiment that office work is a "job with dignity".

Women cooking were commonly seen as mothers, content with serving others. In addition, Filipino adolescents described cooks as burdened by the duty of cooking; U.S.A. students described them as happy, although sometimes juggling career and home responsibilities. As in the drawings of women office workers, Guatemalan young people saw the possibility for betterment, improvement, and reaching one's goals. A cultural difference which is relevant here is that Guatemalan and Filipino adolescents more often described the woman cooking in the role of household worker rather than as mother. This is most likely the result of greater prevalence of household workers in the families of middle-class adolescents from the Philippines and Guatemala. For example, one Guatemalan girl said that the woman cooking [expects to change jobs and get away from this one]. "Espera a cambiar de trabajo para salir de eso". Another relevant cultural difference may be the amount of work involved in cooking. The average number of children for a mother in Guatemala is 6.5, in the Philippines is 4.6, and in the U.S.A. is 1.8. Thus, the recognition of cooking as exhausting and onerous may be partially the result in the Philippines of the volume of cooking. It may also be the result of relatively less sex equity in the home than in the workplace Watkins (1982), and, as in most parts of the world, the fact that women continue to bear primary responsibility for household chores (Jayawardena, 1986). Religion has also reinforced the importance of self-sacrifice to the homemaking role for women in the Philippines (Jayawardena, 1986). The absence of the theme of the burden of cooking in Guatemala, where the average number of children is even greater may be that collectivistic values in Guatemala with the resulting emphasis on family somewhat empowers women through the importance of their familial role (Hofstede, 1983; Maynard, 1974). In the U.S. A. adolescents' ideas about women cooking reflected the individualistic values of happiness, contentment, and making a choice about cooking. One young person emphasized the choice involved in that the woman cooking, "is at home because she wants to be."

Overall, the detailed analysis of the themes in adolescents' interpretations led to dimensions which were unlikely to be detected by adult researchers or adult citizens of these nations. There are several

advantages to this procedure. One is that the drawings used as stimuli had been conceived and realized by the same-nationality peers of the interpreters. This approach provides culturally relevant stimuli, from which participants can derive or project their own meanings (Liggett, 1983). This is similar to the approaches of Lykes (1989) and Bunster (1985) who used locally developed photographs in their studies of Guatemalan children and Peruvian women. A second strength is the high reliability of the theme categories. Although the identification and categorization of the themes required long hours of examination and discussion, the categories proved to be easy to teach to a new scorer, leading to high interrater reliability.

There are also several cautions that should be acknowledged. Since adolescents interpreted only the drawings of their same-nationality peers, it is possible that the different themes which emerged were elicited by particular features of the specific drawings used. That some themes may be specific to the particular drawings is suggested by the large number of references to the top drawing of Figure 6 in Filipino interpreters' comments that the office worker is disorganized. These might have been elicited by the cigarette burning on the edge of her desk, the hat over the back of her chair, or the cat under her desk. However, it seems likely that the dimension of organization- disorganization is more broadly represented in Philippine adolescents views, since another drawing of the woman office worker was described as organized. This theme of organization even occurred in response to a drawing of a woman cooking.

A second caution in interpreting what the themes actually represent. In our opinion, they are a complex mixture of at least three components: (1) the drawers' attitudes and values, (2) the interpreters' attitudes and values, and (3) the shared social and cultural values of adolescents. Some specific indicators of the last component are comments such as "plain housewives" " a smoking/party type", or that "typical secretary." Nevertheless, the distinctions among these possibilites are difficult to make.

In conclusion one might speculate about the meaning of these images for teenagers. In part, their views appear to reflect cultural views of women's roles in the home and in paid employment. For example,

office work appears to have greater status for women in Guatemala than in the U.S.A. Within the U.S.A. office work is stereotyped as routine and boring. In some cases, teenagers may be accurately reporting their own mother's experience. One adolescent wrote, "Mom has this face" in describing the drawings of women cooking. Yet, the idealism of the stage of adolescence (Conger & Petersen, 1984) also appears to affect the teenagers' interpretations. The Guatemalan adolescents did not explicity acknowledge the belief held by adult Ladino women that "a woman's life is a hard one" (Maynard, 1974). A U.S.A. adolescent enthusiasically exclaimed that the woman cooking is a "happy housemaker who is very content in staying around the house making cookies for her 3 adorable, well-behaved children". This unrealistic and idealized image may reflect the influence of television and other mass media on adolescents' views (e.g. Duck, 1990). The idealism of adolescence, however, may also serve an important function for adolescents of the world, who face futures in which women spend most of their lives working, futures with the possibility for natural disaster and political turmoil.

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Author notes

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Table 1. Examples of major themes described by Filipino adolescent interpreters in response to drawings of women cooking

1. Burden/onus

She was only forced.

The bottom lady looks really exhausted from her work. She seems to say "The sooner I get over this, the better."

The girls at the bottom is tired and abused. Her husband makes her do all sorts of things while he goes out of the house and drinks.

These are the type of women who do not say much nor do they complain about their lives.

The bottom picture is angry with her work, seems agitated at having been loaded with a work she least likes, and seems pouring her anger with her work.

2. Content in role

She's happy and satisfied with life.

I think they want to stay in the kitchen and spend their time cooking.

She really loves to cook that their house is always full of goodies to eat.

3. Eating/food

The bottom person is hard-working and most probably loves eating.

The woman not only loves cooking but she also loves to eat what she cooks. Because of this, she's growing fatter and fatter. Her motto is "to cook and cook and eat a lot."

4. Organized

The bottom person is organized and neat.

They like things that are organized and easy to do and they don't like too much dirt.

5. Please or serve others.

They concentrate on serving their own family.

They want to serve others but they are really WEIRD!

6. Mom cooking

This is a typical mother and housewife.

Table 2. Examples of major themes described by Guatemalan adolescent interpreters in response to drawings of women cooking

1. Good and kind

Kind, caring, understanding "son amables, cariñosas, son muy comprensibas"

Aspire to be something good " de grandes esperarían ser algo bueno"

Know how to choose between good and bad "saber elegir entre el bien y el mal"

2. Betterment

Expect to better themselves above all "ellos lo que esperan de la vida es poder sostenerse y superarse mas que toda"

Be someone in life "Para poder ser alguien en la vida"

3. Family

Making efforts for her family "que se esmera por la familia"

Women dedicated to their homes "son mujeres dedicadas a su casa"

Expect to have a family "Esperan una familia"

4. Hardworking

Hardworking woman "mujer trabajadora"

Hardworking at home "son trabajadoras en la casa"

Hardworking "trabajadora"

5. Hope

Hope for better things. "Esperan cosas mejores"

Expect a better world without violence and hate "Lo que esperan es un mundo mejor sin violencia, sin odio"

Table 3. Examples of major themes described by U.S.A. adolescent interpreters in response to drawings of women cooking

1. Content in role

The mothers look happy enough- I don't see any reason not to be- I'd be happy to cook for my kid.

The 3rd woman is a happy housemaker who is very content in staying around the house making cookies for her three adorable, well-behaved children.

These women like to cook and seem to be happy at what they are doing.

2. Please or serve others

She wants nothing more out of life than to please her family.

They like to please others.

The woman at the bottom has kids waiting for her and she seems very happy to be doing them a service or favor.

3. Happy

She is happy and cannot wait to start having a family.

The last one with the chilren appears happy and so do the children.

The middle one shows that this person is very shy and is happy with life.

4. Friendly/nice

#2 seems to be a nice mom, maybe a wimp, but nice nonetheless.

The are nice, sympathetic, and enjoyable to be around.

These women are nice and friendly.

5. Mom cooking

#2 seems to be a nice mom.

Mom has this face.

6. Nostalgia of Mom

Moms cooking for the kids- it use to happen more often but there's nothing wrong with it.

7. Dual career

If they have other jobs, they probably have alot on their minds and might feel that cooking for their kids is the least they can do.

These women have jobs during the day, but have a tight schedule because they have to come home and cook dinner.

8. Burden/onus

Unhappy to be slaving over a hot stove all day "I slave over a hot stove all day and you treat me like shit."

Table 4. Examples of major themes described by Filipino adolescent interpreters in response to drawings of women in offices

1. Beautiful and sexy

These women are like sexy and sophisticated girls that are very modern.

The person at the right is daring and sensual.

The secretary at the right is sexy.

2. Untidy/disorganized

The person at the top is untidy.

She is messy and just throws things around.

She's also untidy and disorganized.

3. Hardworking/serious

The ones in the picture are hardworking and somehow serious of their jobs.

She looks serious with her work.

She is hardworking and doesn't mind working overtime.

4. Rebellious

The top person is talkative, outgoing, rebellious, and goes against rules.

The person at the top is a big problem of most parents. Hates school and paperwork (an obligation).

The first one is liberal and aggressive. She doesn't follow any rules.

5. Tidy/organized

The person at the left is organized and simple.

The 3rd is very organized and neat.

She keeps her work neat and tidy and in order, always up-to-date with her work.

6. Liberal

The first one is liberal and aggressive. She likes what she does and doesn't mind what anybody says about her.

7. Content with job

These women do not want anything out of life, just to get the month's salary adequately, they are contented.

8. Pleasant/nice

The person at the left is enthusiastically inclined, artistic (flowers), nice personality, and accommodating.

9. Yearning for something more

The woman, even though she's just a lowly helper, has also dreams for herself.

Table 5. Examples of major themes described by Guatemalan adolescent interpreters in response to drawings of women in offices

1. Hope

Hope for many things "Esperan muchas cosas mejores"

Expect life to get better "Espera de la vida que cada vez sea mejor"

Expect life is going to be different for them "Que la vida sea distinta para ellos"

2. Hardworking

Personality of hardworking person "tienen una personalidad de gente trabajadora"

That their wives will have a hardworking career "Que sus esposas tendran una carrera muy trabajajadoras"

Hardworking "trabajadora"

3. Betterment

Expect to better themselves "estas personas tambien esperan poder superarse"

Reach goal "alcanzan algo que se han propuesto"

Work to be something or better life "ellas trabajan para hacer o ser algo mejor en la vida"

4. Like work

Like to do a lot of jobs "Les gusta hacer muchos trabajos"

Wanted to work in office "pues querian eso en su vida"

Personality of an office worker "su personalidad es de trabajos en oficinas"

5. Family

[Want] a family. [Esperan] "una familia"

That their children will triumph "Que sus hijos triumfen"

Expect a united family "Esperan tener una familia unida"

6. Education

Higher degrees than other ones "Que ellas tienen un grado más alto que las pasadas"

Dedicated to studies "Que son dedicadas en los estudios:

Professional women "Estes mujeres son profecionales"

7. Strong or complex personality

Stronger personalities "son de un caracter más duro que las anteriores"

Independent women "son mujeres independientes"

Strong personality "tienen un caracter fuerte"

Table 6. Examples of major themes described by U.S.A. adolescent interpreters in response to drawings of women in offices

1. Nine to five routine

These women might be business women but they look like secretaries to me because the one is watching the clock and is anxious to leave (it looks like).

The first one seems young-maybe just a beginner so the day seems to be going extremely slow.

These kids might have mom's that are secretaries or word processors, the clocks could be saying that their jobs are tedious and the jobs are not fun.

2. Hardworking

Whereas the woman on the right seems studious, hardworking and into her work. She will work hard and keep intuned to her work the entire time she is working.

These "gals" are really into their work.

The middle one shows that this person is very smart, organized and willing to work hard in life.

3. Yearning for something more

They dream of being movie stars or copporate heads, but stick with what they're doing to survive.

These women are starting out as secretaries, but their ambition is to move up in the company.

But they all want something better out of life.

4. Success-oriented

Liberated, success-oriented, path setters, looking for success.

These ladies wanting to work hard and be successful.

They might be going to school and getting a master's.

5. Pleasant/nice

These girls are probably pleasant. They are cooperative.

They are nice and easygoing.

They are nice and friendly.

6. Content with job

The last seems to be in a good mood as the day begins (9:05) maybe she is satisfied with her job.

Whereas the woman on the right seems studious, hardworking, and into her work.

7. Bored

These women are bored with their jobs and are doing it for the money and the social life larger offices can bring.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Women participation in work around the world

Figure 2. Guatemalan adolescent girl's drawing of the ideal woman getting water

Figure 3. Drawings from the Philippines of the ideal woman cooking.

Figure 4. Drawings from the U.S.A. of the ideal woman cooking.

Figure 5. Drawings from Guatemala of the ideal woman cooking

Figure 6. Drawings from the Philippines of the ideal woman working in an office.

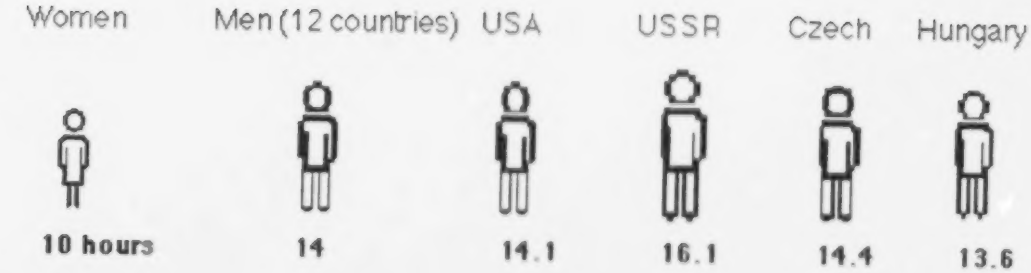
Figure 7. Drawings from the U.S.A. of the ideal woman working in an office.

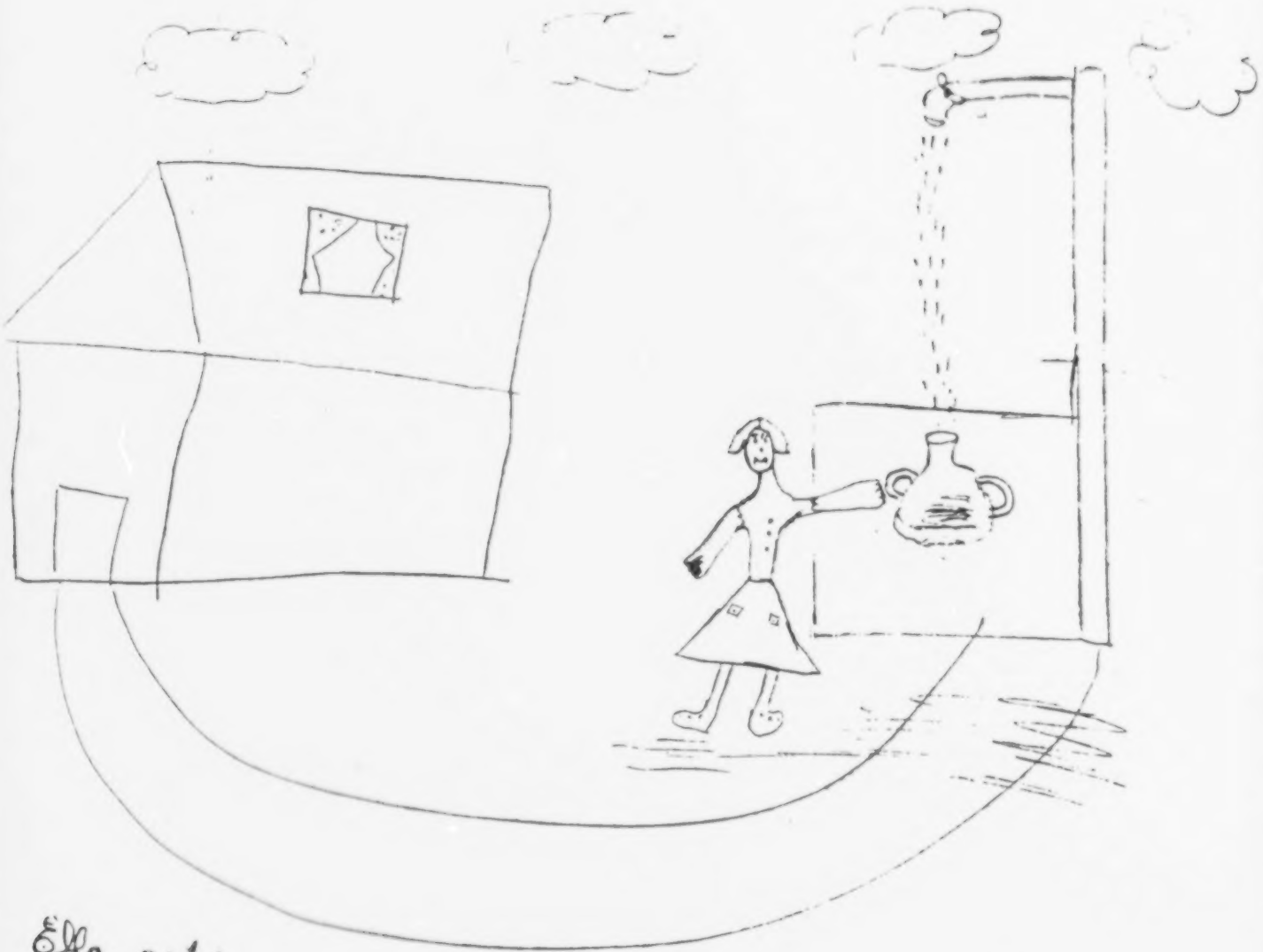
Figure 8. Drawings from Guatemala of the ideal woman working in an office.

Paid Work

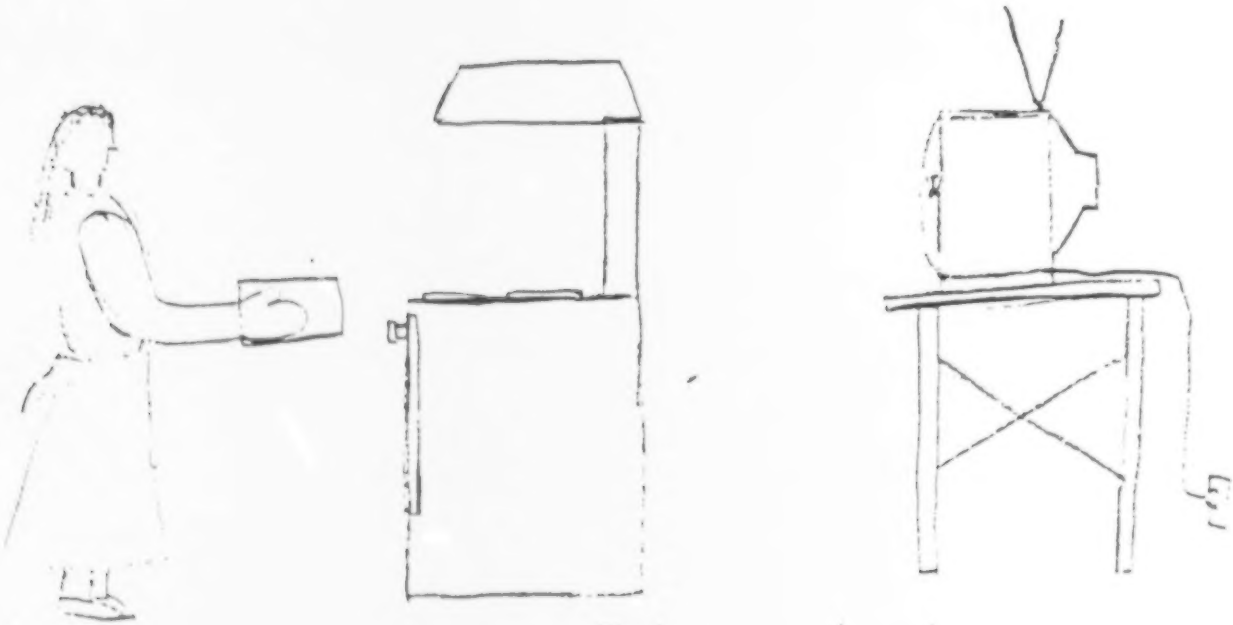
Household Tasks

Leisure Time





Ella está acarriando agua y ella se llamá: Marta



Baking and watching

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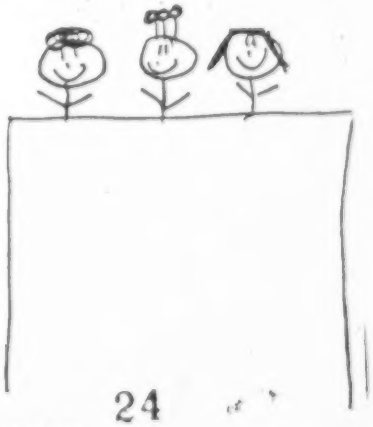

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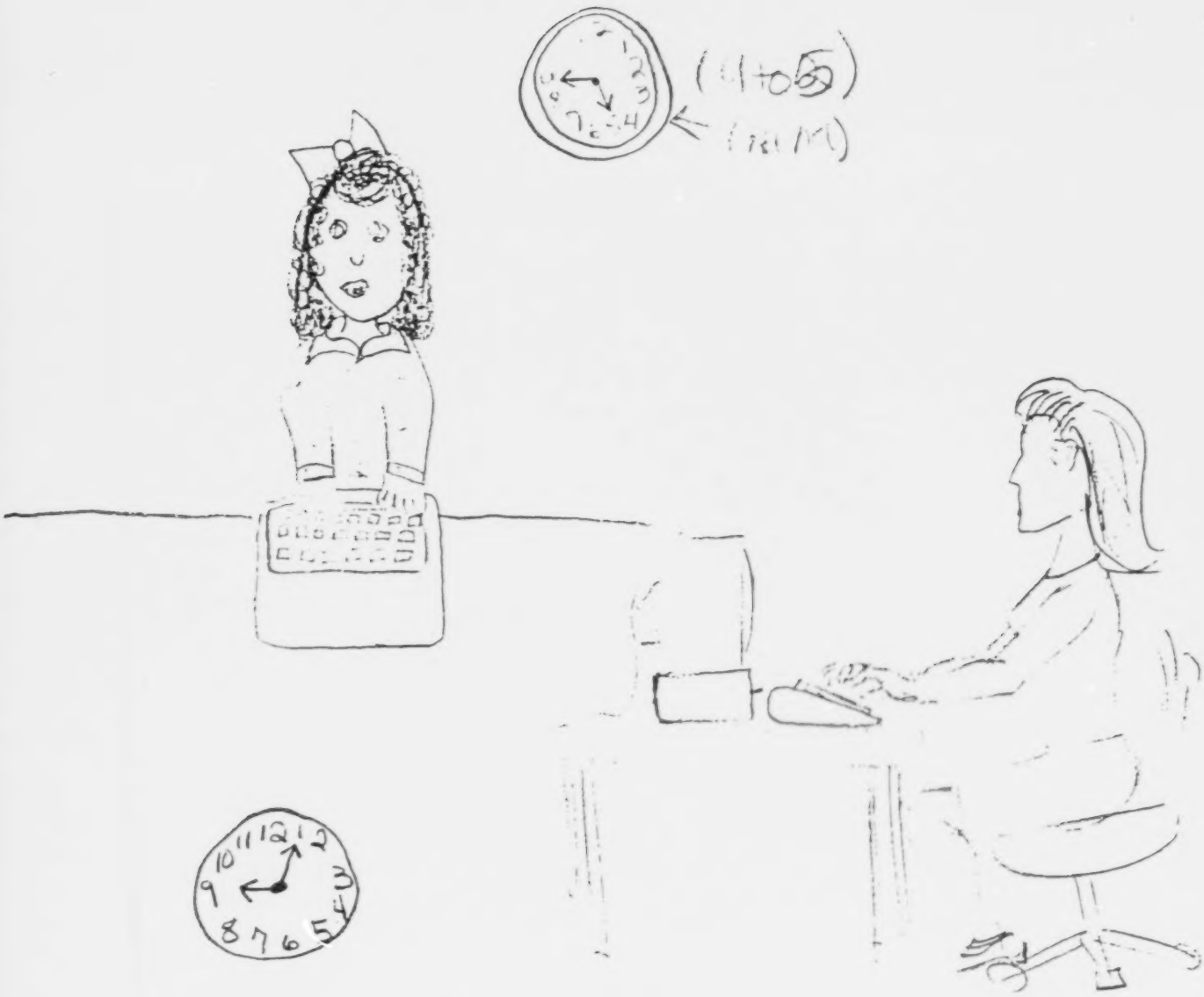

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